Listing of Claims:

1-12 (Canceled)

13. (previously presented) A method for signing an e-mail message, comprising:

receiving a plurality of e-mail messages by a security manager of an e-mail firewall, at least a first message and a second message are from different users associated with different user systems;

the security manager determining if a signature is required for at least two of the received e-mail messages by applying a signature policy which refers to policy rules to determine whether a signature is required by reference to attributes of an e-mail message;

retrieving a signing certificate for the at least two messages in response to said applying a signature policy by reference to a signature policy which refers to policy rules to identify the kind of signing certificate to retrieve by reference to attributes of an e-mail message;

applying the retrieved signing certificate to each message; and

forwarding each message for further processing by the e-mail firewall.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 13 wherein said determining if a signature is required for the message is by applying a first signature policy and said retrieving of a signature is by reference to a second signature policy.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 13 wherein said determining and said retrieving is by reference to applying of one signature policy.